

Message Text

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SUBJECT: ITALIAN SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS VISITS GHANA

1. ITALIAN SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

DR. LUCIANO RADI, LEADING A NINE MEMBER DELEGATION ON A FOUR DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO GHANA, MET WITH HEAD OF STATE AND OTHER DIGNITARIES ON JAN. 24 TO DISCUSS BILATERAL RELATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE.

2. HEAD OF STATE GEN. ACHEAMPONG REITERATED GHANA'S OPPOSITION TO OPPRESSION AND RACIAL SUBJUGATION AND WELCOMED ITALY'S SUPPORT IN STRUGGLE AGAINST COLONIALISM AND RELATED EVILS. RADI IN TURN PRAISED GHANA'S STAND ON PROBLEMS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA AND EXPRESSED ADMIRATION FOR ACHEAMPONG'S ACHIEVEMENTS IN GHANA ITSELF.

3. RADI ALSO MET WITH COMMISSIONER FOR ECONOMIC PLANNING GARDINER TO GO OVER BILATERAL PROJECTS AND PRIVATE ITALIAN VENTURES HERE. ROAD DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION, PROVISION OF FISHING TRAWLERS, IRRIGATION AND HYDROELECTRIC PROJECTS AND ASSISTANCE IN INCREASING PRODUCTION OF COCOA AND OTHER CASH CROPS WERE IDENTIFIED AS LIKELY AREAS FOR GREATER ITALIAN-GHANAIAI COOPERATION.

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4. IN CALL ON CHIEF OF DEFENSE STAFF AKUFFO, RADI WAS THANKED FOR ITALY'S ASSISTANCE TO GHANA'S MILITARY FORCES (ITALY IS TRAINING PERSONNEL IN THE AIR FORCE.). AKUFFO SAID HE HOPED ASSISTANCE WOULD BE INCREASED TO COVER TRAINING OF PILOTS, AS HAND BEEN CASE IN PAST, AND RADI ANNOUNCED THAT ITALIAN MILITARY MISSION WOULD BE RE-ESTABLISHED IN SOME UNITS OF GHANA

ARMY.

5. COMMISSIONER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS FELLI GAVE DINNER FOR RADI JAN. 24, AT WHICH HE SAID GHANA'S RELATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES CONCERNING HER EXTERNAL DEBTS HAD MUCH IMPROVED FOLLOWING MARCH 1974 TALKS IN ROME: THESE TALKS COULD BE SEEN AS HAVING BROUGHT ABOUT NEW ERA IN GHANA'S RELATIONS WITH THE WEST, INCLUDING ITALY. FELLI ALSO PRAISED ITALY'S EFFORTS TO INVOLVE EEC MORE DEEPLY IN DEVELOPING WORLD AND NOTED CONCLUSION OF LOME CONVENTION MUST HAVE BEEN SOURCE OF SATISFACTION TO GOI. RADI MENTIONED A TECHNICAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT WOULD BE SIGNED AT END OF HIS VISIT EXTENDING ITALIAN AID IN AIR FORCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION SECTORS.

6. COMMENT: GOI HAS A MODERATE STAKE IN GHANA AND APPARENTLY WISHES TO INCREASE IT. ITALIANS WERE CONTRACTORS FOR MASSIVE AKOSOMBO HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT AND WOULD LIKE PIECE OF THE ACTION RE PLANNED KPONG DAM. GHANA ARMY HAS BEEN MAJOR PURCHASER OF FIAT VEHICLES AND AN ITALIAN LT. COL. HEADS UP SMALL TEAM TRAINING AIR FORCE. REFINERY AT PORT OF TEMA WAS PREVIOUSLY OWNED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALIAN FIRM (IT IS NOW 100 PER CENT GOG OWNED). THERE IS A SMALL BUT PROSPEROUS ITALIAN COMMUNITY HERE (MANY OF THEM INVOLVED IN CONSTRUCTION BUSINESS) AND A HANDFUL OF BILATERAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. RADI'S VISIT DOES NOT STRIKE US AS SIGNIFICANT POLITICALLY BUT PROBABLY SIGNALS GREATER GOI INVOLVEMENT IN GHANA'S ECONOMY.
SMITH

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